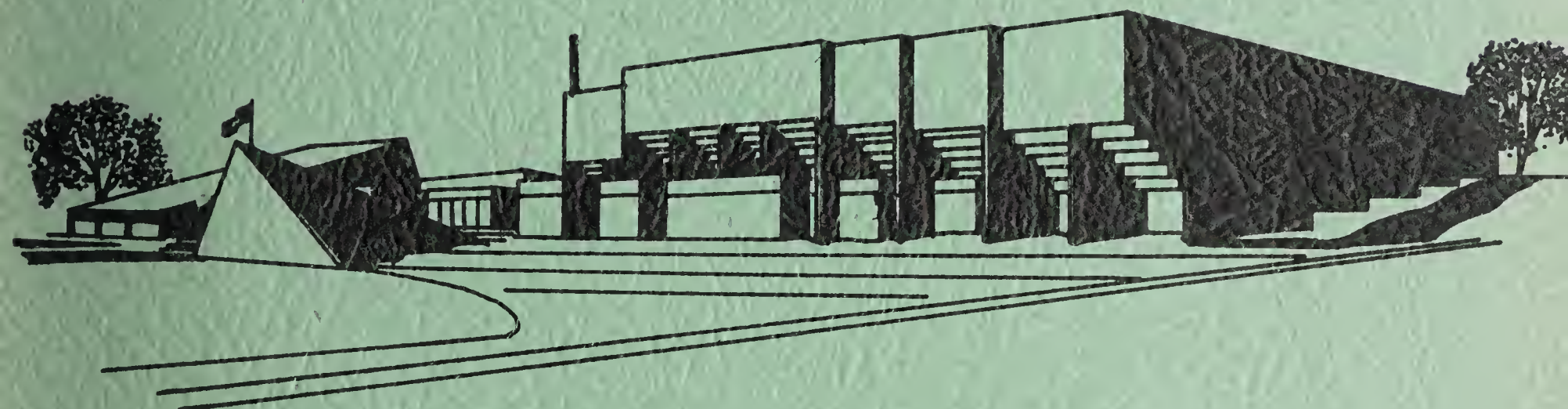


standards for provision of municipal parks

A STUDY



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APRIL 1968

SCARBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The Scarborough Official Plan includes Standards for the provision of Parks on the basis of " $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons - Neighbourhood Park" and " $\frac{1}{2}$ acre per 1,000 persons - Community Park where no wide valley lands exist".

These standards, adopted in 1956 in the Official Plan, were realistic on the basis of residential development then prevailing, as at gross densities up to 20 persons per acre (i.e. predominantly single-family with a few low-density apartments) the $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons could be adequately met by the "5% Municipal Lands" provisions of The Planning Act. ($1,000 \text{ persons} \div 20 \text{ p.p.a.} = 50 \text{ acres} @ 5\% = 2\frac{1}{2} \text{ acres}$).

With the introduction of increasing numbers of high-density apartments, the provision of this Standard of Neighbourhood Parks has become neither feasible nor desirable, as it would result in Parks of excessive size for purely Neighbourhood requirements.

It is therefore the purpose of this Study to completely review the Official Plan Parks Standards; to analyze the basic requirements for all types of Parks related to the various Land Uses, Population Characteristics and Social Criteria, so as to formulate more appropriate standards, as the basis for an overall "Parks Plan" for the Municipality.

This constitutes a revised approach to the "Parkland Study" prepared jointly by the Recreation and Parks, and Planning Departments in 1965, which was considered by Council and referred back for further study, and the directive of the Planning Board incorporated in the "Priorities for Major Studies" for 1966 and 1967.

PART 1 - THE NEED FOR PARKS

Parks satisfy basic human needs for open space, fresh air, exercise and visual satisfaction through contact with nature. In their absence, the physical and moral fibre of a community can break down, resulting in increased crime and juvenile delinquency and unhealthy living conditions, all conducive to creation of slums. Provision of parks is therefore a good Municipal investment as it increases the desirability of living in a well-planned and provided community, and thereby maintains property values.

Parks may be divided into two major functions - "Passive" and "Recreational", and the majority of Canadian and American cities recognize a standard of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons for these combined functions. The Metro Plan advocates the total of 10 acres per 1,000 persons split between Metro providing $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons within the Metro Planning Area overall as "Regional Parks" basically for Passive Uses, with Local Municipalities providing $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons as "Neighbourhood" and "Community Parks" mainly for Recreational Uses, with Neighbourhood Parks being $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres per 1,000 persons within walking distance of the population served.

It is within these contexts that this Study has been prepared.

PART 2 - BASIC FUNCTIONS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD
AND COMMUNITY PARKS

Within the context of the Metropolitan provision of $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons, and Municipal provision of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons, the latter can be expected to provide mainly for "Active Recreational" needs of the Municipal population, with Metro providing the "Passive" facilities in the form of Regional Parks.

The provision of such Active Recreational Parks by a Municipality can be further divided into two major types - Neighbourhood; and Community (including District).

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

These are local parks catering mainly to the everyday recreational needs of people living in a neighbourhood, and of a size commensurate to that population. As a local facility, they should not be of a size or character that will attract use by population from outside the neighbourhood, as would destroy the amenities by increased traffic, noise, congestion, etc.

In a few cases neighbourhoods have been served by several small parks fulfilling special needs of areas smaller than the neighbourhood itself, providing such facilities as tot - lots of approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ acre for pre-school children with sand-boxes, wading pools, etc., woodlands and parkettes of a scenic or passive nature. In recent years however, Neighbourhood Parks have been not less than 4 acres in size and more normally minimum 5 acres associated with a 6-acre Public School Site.



NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK

Edgewood - 4 Acres

Adjoining Public School.

COMMUNITY PARK

McGregor - $9\frac{1}{2}$ Acres Adjoining
Winston Churchill Collegiate and
General Crerar Public School.



DISTRICT PARK (RECREATIONAL)

Cedarbrook - $48\frac{3}{4}$ Acres

adjoining Cedarbrae Collegiate
(showing Ski and Toboggan Runs).

COMMUNITY PARKS (Including District)

As major recreational facilities, Community Parks should be located strategically in relation to traffic arteries and public transportation serving large populations within a Community or group of Communities, or perhaps District Parks providing specialized facilities catering to the entire Municipality.

In view of the great diversity of facilities provided in Community Parks (or Centres) a wide range of acreages can be appropriate, and Community Parks (or Centres) exist in Scarborough ranging from 0.11 acres (Macey Hall) to 49.52 acres (Thompson Park) with an overall average of approximately 14 acres.

A standard Community Park in an "Urban Development Area" (i.e. an area under Subdivision) is approximately 10 acres, associated with a 15-acre Secondary School and a 6-acre Public School, whereby a combined Open Space of some 30 acres can be provided serving approximately 20,000 persons. This results in a Community Park Standard of $\frac{1}{2}$ acre per 1,000 persons.

Community Parks provide such recreational facilities as Youth Centres, Swimming Pools, Artificial Ice Rinks, Tennis Courts, Baseball and Football Fields etc., and the larger ones (District Parks) also provide for Winter Sports, Picnic Areas and other specialized uses, serving large areas of the Borough.

While certain parts of a Community or District Park may be satisfactorily allocated and set aside for Neighbourhood Park purposes for the neighbourhood in which it is located, such parks should be orientated to the interior of the neighbourhood with direct access from the residential area.



DISTRICT PARK (PASSIVE)

Cedarbrook (showing
Picnic Facilities).

DISTRICT (SPECIALIZED)

BIRCHMOUNT STADIUM

18-3/4 Acres Adjoining
Birchmount Collegiate.



NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK FACILITIES

IN COMMUNITY PARK

Knob Hill Park 21-3/4 acres
Adjoining Knob Hill Public
School (showing Neighbourhood
Play Equipment).



PART 3 - STANDARDS FOR MUNICIPAL PARKS

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

Scarborough's Neighbourhoods constitute residential areas bounded by traffic arteries within which populations are planned as will support Public Schools of between 16 and 25 rooms. Depending upon the size of the neighbourhood and the types, densities and mixtures of residential units, neighbourhood populations are normally between 3,000 and 7,000 persons, with rare exceptions below or above those figures.

It has been established that Neighbourhood Parks should be at least 5 acres so as to satisfactorily accommodate the various types of recreational facilities normally desired*; to provide for suitable park dimensions as will minimize impact upon surrounding uses (i.e. at least 400 ft. square); to provide for economical maintenance by use of machines.

As local facilities, Neighbourhood Parks should not exceed about 8 acres, as to fully utilize larger acreages, uses not truly "Neighbourhood" in character have to be introduced. However, Community of District Parks within a Neighbourhood may be deemed to satisfy its "Neighbourhood Park" requirements.

From the above it is seen that Neighbourhood Populations range from 3,000 to 7,000 persons; satisfactory Neighbourhood Parks range from 5 to 8 acres;

THEREFORE the standard of $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres per 1,000 persons appears to be realistic and is recommended for adoption throughout the Borough for Neighbourhood Parks.

* See Appendix I.

Applying this standard - In an average neighbourhood of 200 acres at 25 persons per acre = 5,000 persons; a centrally-located Neighbourhood Park of approximately $6\frac{1}{4}$ acres associated with a 6-acre Public School would be well within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile walking distance from all parts of the neighbourhood.

This standard can also be adequately met by the "5% land dedication" provisions of The Planning Act relating to subdivisions, generally with a monetary "surplus" which can be applied to the acquisition of lands for Community or District Parks.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Scarborough Community Parks are generally planned to serve a population of 20,000 persons and Appendix II shows typical Community Park facilities requiring a minimum of 10 acres --- therefore the standard of $\frac{1}{2}$ acre per 1,000 persons is realistic. This, together with the Neighbourhood Standard of $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres per 1,000 persons totals $1\frac{3}{4}$ acres per 1,000 persons, leaving $\frac{3}{4}$ acre to be provided ($1\frac{1}{4}$ acres in Phase II Communities).

MAJOR COMMUNITY (DISTRICT) PARKS

It is recommended that this remainder be in the form of Major Community ("District") Parks of the Adams, Cedar Brook or Thompson type, which provide for specialized activities such as tobogganing, horse-back riding, picnic areas etc. in addition to major sports facilities, and band-shells, botanical gardens, civic centres, stadiums, etc.

While no specific standard is applicable to such parks, sufficient acreage should be acquired on an overall Municipal basis as will achieve (with Neighbourhood and Community Parks) the overall standard of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons Borough population (3 acres per 1,000 persons Community Population within Phase II).

SUMMARY OF STANDARDS

<u>TYPE OF PARK</u>	<u>MINIMUM AREA</u>	<u>MAXIMUM AREA</u>	<u>MINIMUM STANDARD</u>	<u>BASIS</u>
NEIGHBOURHOOD	5 Acs.	8 Acs.	$1\frac{1}{4}$ Acs. Per 1,000 Persons.	1 Per N/Hood up to 7,000 Persons.
COMMUNITY	10 Acs.	20 Acs.	$\frac{1}{2}$ Ac. Per 1,000 Persons.	1 Per 20,000 to 40,000 Persons.
DISTRICT	20 Acs.	-	-	Overall Mun- icipal and Specialized.
TOTAL	-	-	$2\frac{1}{2}$ Acs. Per 1,000 Persons.	-



COMBINED, DISTRICT, COMMUNITY, NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK

Centennial Recreation Centre - 26 Acres

Adjoining Bellmere Public School.

APPENDIX I

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

<u>AREA</u>	<u>REQUIRED SPACE - SQUARE FEET</u>	
	<u>MINIMUM</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>
TOT LOT	5,000	10,000
APPARATUS AREA	4,000	8,000
WADING POOL	5,000	10,000
FREE PLAY AREA	10,000	25,000
MULTI-USE PAVED AREA	15,000	30,000
FIELD GAMES	116,000	180,000
COURT GAMES	40,000	80,000
QUIET ACTIVITIES	6,000	10,000
OLDER ADULT AREAS	3,000	5,000
SHELTER HOUSE	4,000	8,000
LANDSCAPING	<u>10,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>218,000</u>	<u>386,000</u>
	(5 Acres).	(8.85 Acres).

APPENDIX II

SPACE REQUIREMENTS FOR TYPICAL COMMUNITY PARK

<u>AREA</u>	<u>A C R E S</u>	
	<u>MINIMUM</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>
Fields for Baseball, Softball and Football	5	10
Tennis Courts, Horseshoes, Basketball, Volleyball and Shuffleboard	1	2
Area for Lawn Games	1	2
Shelter with Toilets and Drinking Water	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
Landscaped Buffer Areas	1	2
Swimming Pool with a Bath House	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
Off-Street Parking Area	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	<u>10</u>	<u>20</u>

PART 4 - APPLICATION OF STANDARDS
TO OVERALL SCARBOROUGH

The first step involved in applying the foregoing general standards to the Scarborough situation is an analysis of existing park provisions in relation to existing and planned populations.

OVERALL

With an existing inventory (March 1967) of 944 acres serving a Borough population of approximately 280,000 persons, the recommended minimum overall standard of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons is exceeded by some 240 acres, in relation to existing 1967 population.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Despite the above overall surplus, 17 "developed" neighbourhoods have deficiencies in excess of 1 acre of Neighbourhood Park in relation to the recommended minimum standard of $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres per 1,000 planned persons within the Neighbourhood. These deficiencies total approximately 73 acres, as shown on Map I attached.

COMMUNITY

Map II attached indicates those areas South of Highway 401 which are more than $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from a Community (or District) Park or Recreational Facility (this radius representing a standard of 1 Community Park per 25,000 persons). Three major areas are thereby indicated as seriously deficient in Community Park Facilities (Cliffcrest; East Woburn, and Guildwood/West Hill) for which new Community Parks or "development" of existing Neighbourhood Parks should be provided.

The total parks required for the planned Borough Population of 612,000 persons will be 1,530 acres, therefore as 944 acres exist, approximately 586 acres will be required in the future, related to a population growth of 332,000 persons (average approximately $1\frac{3}{4}$ acres per 1,000 persons).

Notwithstanding this average requirement, at the outset, average annual park acquisitions should be continued on the basis of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons annual population increase (a difference of between 7 to 11 acres per year) so as to maintain the present surplus of parklands against the eventual prohibitive cost of land when the municipality approaches full development, yet still has substantial population growth potential.

The present average population increase of 10,000 to 15,000 persons would therefore require between 25 to $37\frac{1}{2}$ acres annually, and this would be made up of lands to make up the deficiencies in existing neighbourhoods; parks in newly-developing areas; and acquisitions of District Parks.

PART 4(a) - IMPLEMENTATION

To achieve its park objectives, the Borough has the following means to acquire land:-

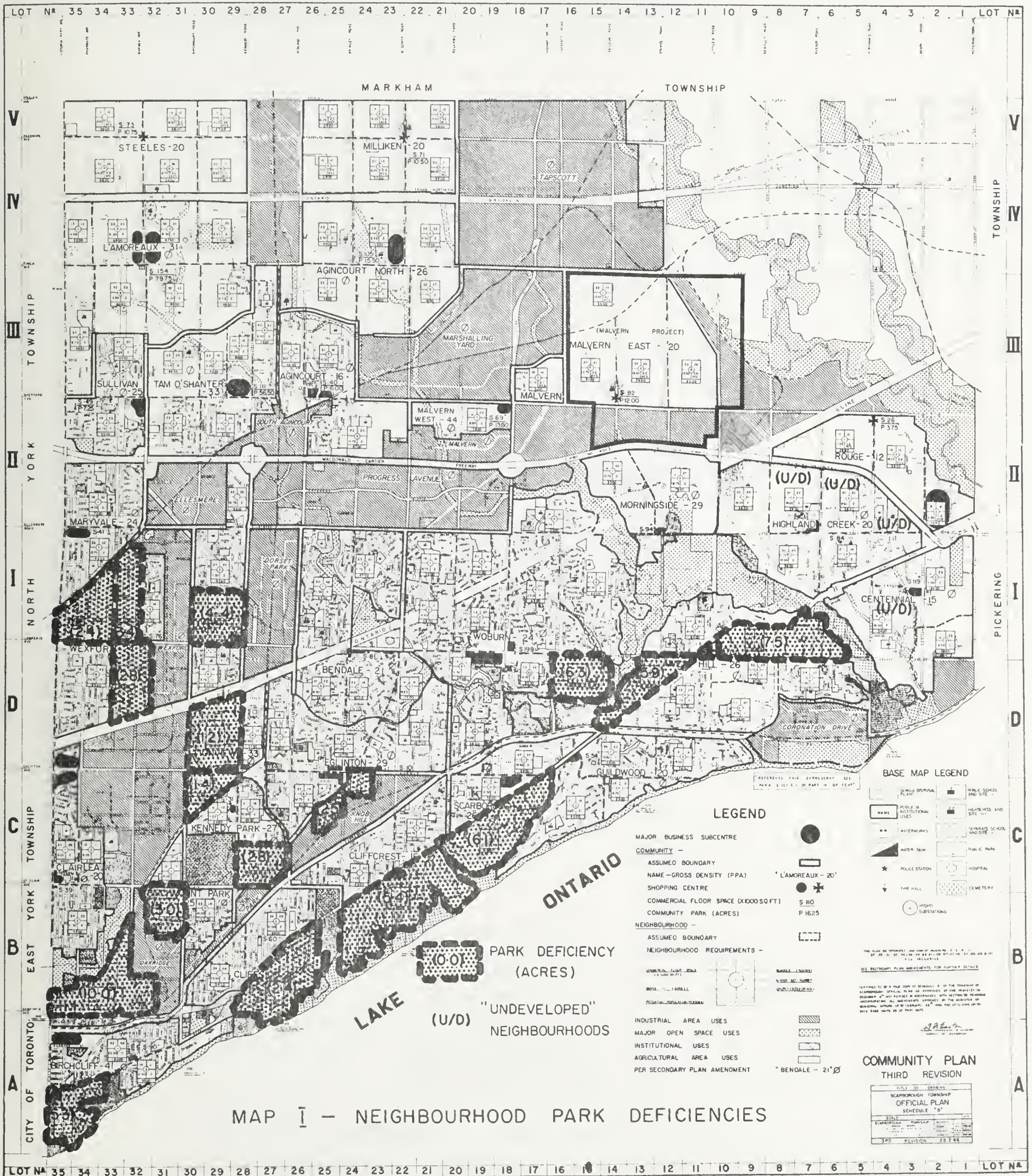
- (1) The 5% public land dedication or money in lieu, on subdivisions or consents.
- (2) Monetary contributions received as a condition of approval of amendments to by-laws.
- (3) Capital financing for land acquisition.

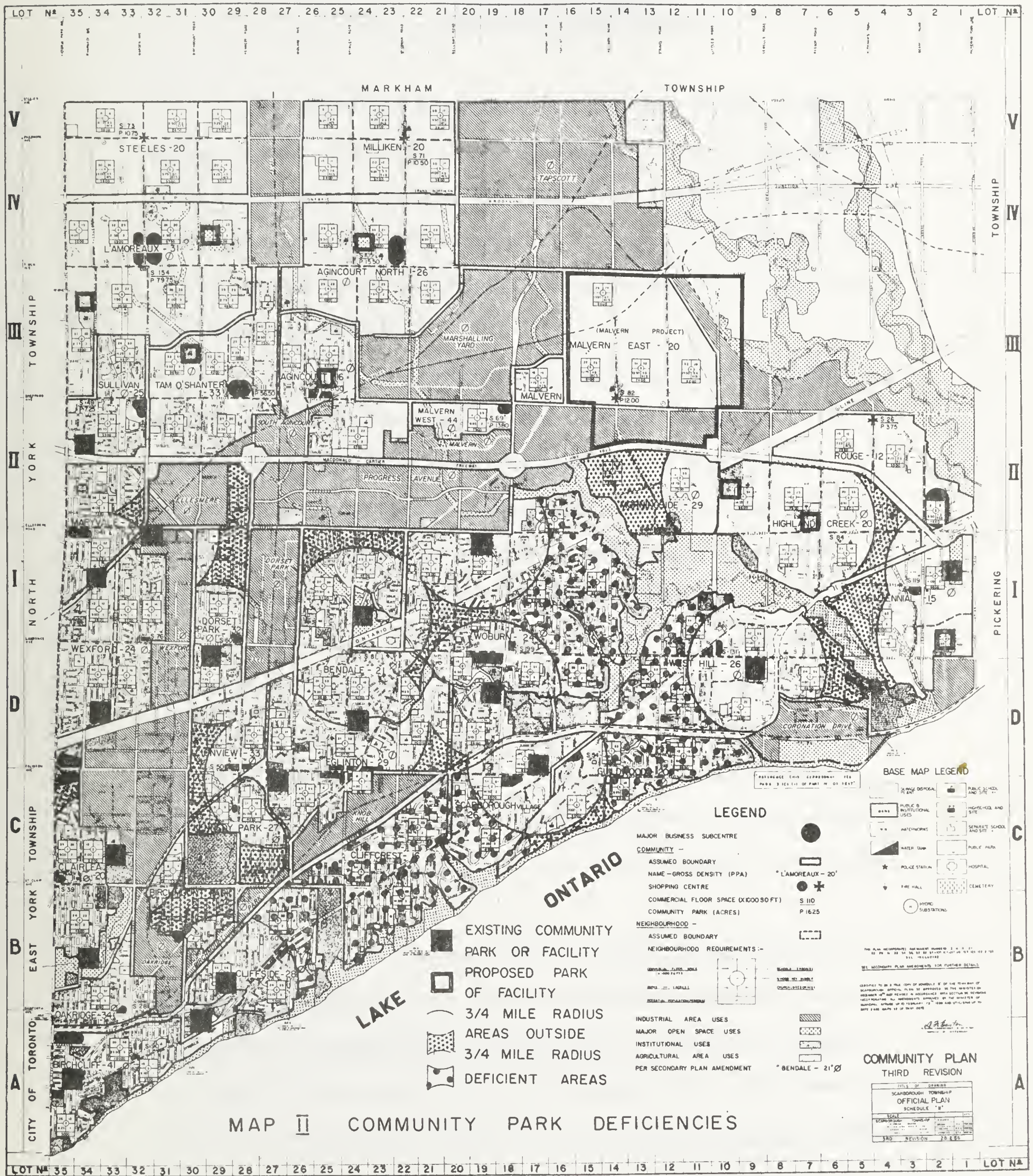
On the basis of a 10,000 to 15,000 annual population increase, an average annual total (at $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons) of 25 to $37\frac{1}{2}$ acres of parkland is required.

The 5% dedication and zoning by-law contributions are providing about two-thirds of the land requirements. From 1962 to 1965, the Borough has averaged \$150,000 a year capital expenditures for land.

Provided the afore-mentioned average acquisitions are continued, increased with marked increase in annual population growths, the Borough will meet the recommended minimal standards of this report.

It is essential that land acquisition be continued as a high priority in the Borough's programme, such that parkland will not be a limiting factor in the Borough's growth.





PART 5 - RELATION OF PARK NEEDS AND
STANDARDS TO DENSITY

The foregoing statements and standards relate to the average situation experienced by Municipalities in the provision of Parks mainly for families with children. However, within Metropolitan Toronto all indications point to a greater demand for high-density accommodation catering to a large extent to adults, with few school-age children.

Not only the absence of children, but the consequent greater mobility of the adults tends to reduce the need for local Neighbourhood Park facilities, furthermore such high-density apartments normally include recreational facilities such as swimming pools, tennis and badminton courts, sauna baths, recreation rooms, etc. within the development itself.

Subject to such facilities actually being provided and maintained as part of development zoning requirements, it is recommended that the $1\frac{1}{4}$ acre per 1,000 persons "Neighbourhood Park Requirement" for population within apartment developments exceeding 60 units per acre and with limitations on family-sized suites (i.e. more than 1 bedroom) be reduced to 60% (i.e. $\frac{3}{4}$ acre per 1,000 persons).

This would have the effect of reducing the acreage of Neighbourhood Park required for that apartment population, and increasing the Community or District Park requirements, because the total $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons standard would still have to be met for the apartment population on an overall Municipal basis.

This is considered realistic as more economic for the Municipality to provide and also more appropriate in the provision of Community, and especially District Parks with facilities normally required by such apartment residents (skiing, picnicking, horse-back riding, etc.) and which an apartment developer cannot provide.

It is stressed however that such a reduction should only apply to developments obviously not suited nor intended for "family occupancy" involving school-age children, and applicable only to "Redevelopment Area" Neighbourhoods for which an Official Plan Policy has been adopted to this effect.

PART 6 - SUMMARY

PROVISION OF PARKS is a good Municipal investment by ensuring a satisfactory urban environment, providing for active and wholesome use of leisure-time, (which is increasing), and the protection of property (and assessment) values.

Within the Metropolitan Toronto complex, the Local Municipalities' responsibilities are orientated mainly to provision of active recreational facilities, with Metro providing Passive Facilities in the form of Regional Parks, within and outside Metro Toronto.

The 2½ acre per 1,000 overall standard for Municipal Parks is appropriate for recreational needs and should be provided in the form of Neighbourhood, Community, and District Parks.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS should be strictly local in nature and should not be of a size or character as will encourage use by population from outside the neighbourhood - and each neighbourhood should therefore have its own Park of a size commensurate to the neighbourhood population and preferably associated with the Public School. However, parts of Community or District Parks within the Neighbourhood may be used.

COMMUNITY PARKS should be located strategically to approximately 20,000 to 25,000 persons on a traffic artery, close to public transportation providing major recreational facilities, and preferably associated with a Secondary School. While a minimum 10-acre Park is desirable, intensive development of smaller acreages and buildings can be undertaken as an alternative within developed areas.

DISTRICT PARKS are large parks situated strategically throughout the Municipality, but not particularly serving any specific area and satisfying special needs, with sufficient acreage as will bring the total acreage of all Municipal Parks to $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons Municipal Population.

PART 7 - RECOMMENDATIONS

1. WHEREAS

Population densities of Communities and Neighbourhoods have significantly increased through the introduction of high-density apartments, thereby rendering the existing Official Plan Park Standards inappropriate;

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the following standards for Provision of Municipal Parks be adopted as a guide in the preparation of Secondary Plans; consideration of applications involving increased population densities; computation of levies for land and/or monies towards the provision of such parks:-

Municipal Parks Standards

The total acreages of all Municipal Parks owned by and/or under the jurisdiction of the Borough of Scarborough to be equivalent to not less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons existing Borough population, such Parks to comprise the following:-

- (a) Neighbourhood Parks provided for in each Neighbourhood as defined in Schedule 'B' (Community Plan) of the Official Plan, at a minimum standard of $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres per 1,000 persons planned population in the Neighbourhood except:-

- (i) Within Neighbourhoods declared to be "Redevelopment Neighbourhoods", high density non-family type apartments (established under restrictions limiting suites of more than 1 Bedroom), and meeting requirements for provision of appropriate private recreational facilities on-site; a minimum standard of $\frac{3}{4}$ acre Neighbourhood Park per 1,000 apartment residents may be permitted.
- (b) Community Parks may be provided on the basis of one Park or Community Recreational Centre to serve 20,000 to 25,000 persons, located conveniently to that population, and at a standard of up to $\frac{1}{2}$ acre per 1,000 persons planned population.
- (c) District Parks may be provided by the Borough of Scarborough strategically within the Municipality to serve large areas, with Recreational, Passive or Specialized Facilities on the basis of appropriate acreages as will maintain (together with Neighbourhood and Community Parks acreages) the overall Municipal Park minimum standard of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres per 1,000 persons existing population within the

Borough of Scarborough.

2. A PARKS PLAN be prepared and adopted by the Borough of Scarborough to achieve the following:-

- (i) An analysis of all existing Municipal Parks as to their appropriate location, size and development which ordinarily shall be in accordance with the types, facilities, and locational criteria set forth in this Study and to reallocate the existing functions where deemed unsatisfactory;
- (ii) The assignment of priorities for the acquisition of Neighbourhood Parks to meet the deficiencies in Neighbourhoods within which increased population can be anticipated (See Map I);
- (iii) To plan the location, priority and establishment of Community Parks or Recreation Centres for the three major areas which show a deficiency of such facilities (See Map II);
- (iv) To establish 5-year programs of parkland acquisitions consistent with anticipated population growth by Communities and Neighbourhoods and District Parks when necessary;

- (v) A Capital Works Program for development of parks to meet the standards and requirements in relation to Population Growth and to meet all the objectives set forth in this Study.

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- 7) Community Planning Review. Vol. VI. No. 1. Ottawa. (March 1956).
- 8) Wayne R. Williams - Recreation Places. Reinhold Publishing Company. New York. (1958).
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